

Steeplechase not on track for '87

Neither the town nor the Halton Board of Education are willing to fund a steeplechase at the Georgetown District High School.

Friday afternoon, councillors turned down the request for funding the \$25,000 addition to the new outdoor track.

The request came from GDHS principal Barb Singleton, in a letter to the town's Recreation Director Tom Shepard.

"I said no, definitely not, when we're still looking for a place for the (Credit Valley) Artisans," Mr. Shepard said.

Although the Halton Board has approved the installation of a new outdoor track for the high school this year, they have turned down the school's request for a steeplechase.

Mrs. Singleton says having a steeplechase put in now, while the

track is being built would cost less than adding it later. It will allow the town to host Regional, Ontario Federation of Secondary Schools Athletic Association (OFSAA), and Ontario Track and Field Association events.

"The interest in the school in the past has been such that the students and staff have made their own steeplechase hurdle to practise and have been successful, in the top 10, at the provincial level, in the past," Mrs. Singleton says.

The request caused strong emotions among members of the town's budget committee Friday afternoon.

"I'm so angry, I'm shaking," Coun. Pam Sheldon said. "In the last couple of months we've had the Board refuse to take responsibility for a bridge (at Acton's Robert Little Public School), a pool agree-

ment...and now, for a steeplechase."

"I get increasingly upset. We are saying no because it's not our responsibility. It's the Board's responsibility. We have a \$9 million budget and they have a \$113 million budget," she said. "I don't like that kind of pressure increasingly coming back."

Coun. Marilyn Serjeantson said if the town had the money, she'd be pushing for funding a steeplechase. She said the facility would bring people to Halton Hills.

"Coun. Sheldon doesn't leave much to be said," Coun. Rick Bonnette said. "We've got a principal obviously barking up the wrong tree to get money."

Coun. Betty Fisher said she spoke to the Board Chairman and was told Arlene Bruce had no knowledge the town had also received the request

for funds.

"If the Board wants us to help fund it (the request) has to come from the Board. There has to be a clear message to the Board to put their employees in line, that they have no right to make a request to council," she said.

Mr. Shepard defended the actions of the school principal, saying Mrs. Singleton did nothing different from what any other principal would do. He said he's frequently asked for help from principals wanting to improve their school with computers, playgrounds, or tetherballs.

"What I don't want, is negative feelings towards Barb Singleton the principal," Mr. Shepard stressed.

Coun. Sheldon said he hoped the community at large would help fund Mrs. Singleton's request, and said she didn't blame the principal for coming to the town.

Noise, enforcement study prepared on Croatian site

Discussions with the solicitor of the Croatian Cultural Centre and the town are still going on, to come up with a way of controlling noise and activities on the Fifth Line and Winston Churchill Boulevard property.

Monday night, the town's Deputy Planning Director Bruce MacLean said a draft agreement has been prepared. However, the Centre's solicitor wants more discussion on it before it's brought to town councillors.

Coun. Joe Hewitt and Mayor Russ Miller said the residents near the Centre have been ignored in this process. They were reminded council instructed the planning department to try and resolve the problems this way.

Planning Director Ian Keith said

he anticipates bringing council a report on the agreement within a couple of weeks.

The discussions originated after council put off the Centre's rezoning application pending solutions to noise and enforcement problems on the property.

Coun. Betty Fisher said it would be the courteous thing to do to let the residents near the Centre see the planning department report on the Friday, when councillors will be receiving it, instead of on Monday afternoon when it is traditionally available to the press and public.

Town Engineer Bob Austin said the policy of releasing town reports and the Monday night meeting agenda on Monday afternoons was to

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In the hills

Magna man comes

The Town of Halton Hills will be hosting a business luncheon on March 24 at the Halton Hills Cultural Centre through the Town's Business Advisory Committee.

Frank Stonach of Magna International will be speaking at the luncheon and the Town will release its municipal brochure and information on its business development policy.

All members of the business community wishing to attend should contact the Clerk's department of the Town of Halton Hills. Tickets are \$10 and space is limited.

Hold out your arm

Hold out your arm and give the gift of life. The Acton Red Cross is hosting a blood donor clinic March 24 at the Acton Royal Canadian Legion.

The Acton IGA is sponsoring this clinic, which begins at 5:30 p.m. and ends at 8:30 p.m.

Spring fashions

Catch the latest designs in swimsuits and summer wear when the Georgetown Hospital Auxiliary presents its spring fashion show March 25.

Elizabeth's and Cameron's Fashions are the two downtown Georgetown retailers who will be providing the models and clothing for the show, at Holy Cross Auditorium.

Dessert and coffee will be served at 7:30 p.m. but the show itself begins at 8 p.m. Admission is \$6. For more information and tickets call 877-4593 or 877-8212.

Stops nixed

There won't be all-way stop signs at Division Street and McDonald Boulevard in Acton, councillors decided Monday night.

However, they asked the town engineer to look at problems in the area like speeding and a residential fence that blocks visibility.

Town Engineer Bob Austin said new radar counts will be taken in the spring of that area.

Councillors have received a 46 name petition asking for a three way stop at the intersection.

Water testing

You'll soon see drilling rigs around Georgetown as the Region's groundwater supply study gets underway.

The Region is starting a well test-drilling program to find water and has asked the town for permission to install four observation wells within the Tenth and Eighth Line road allowances.

The additional wells are needed to allow Georgetown to grow to 40,000 population.

Stormwater plan

The Georgetown West Master Drainage Plan Study is ready and will be presented at a public information centre shortly.

Prepared by Phillips Planning and Engineering Limited, the Plan looks at stormwater management in Georgetown West. After receiving public input, the town will bring the document to council for adoption. The document is to act as a guide for development in Georgetown West.

Plans not ditched

Town councillors approved a ditching program for 1987, subject to budget approval, Monday night.

The \$125,000 program will clean up the Commerce Court Industrial area outfall which wasn't done last year, and undertake other ditching programs deferred in 1986.

Ditching prevents further damage to the roadway or private property.

Spring fitness

The Acton YMCA is meeting your fitness needs by offering morning and a new evening fitness class this Spring. Morning classes are twice per week from 9:00-10:00 a.m. with weekly "weigh-ins" for those trying to shed those extra pounds. Evening fitness classes begin the week of March 30 every Tuesday and Thursday from 8:00-9:00 p.m. Don't delay. Join now!



On any other early day in March these young men might be seen as trying to qualify for a Polar Bear Club but not last weekend. Seen here enjoying the heat and sun are (from left) Dave Panabaker, Tim Panabaker and Joe Moneypanny. They were seen on top of the snow on Market Street in Georgetown.

Department heads told it's time to cut their budgets

By ANI PEDERIAN
Herald Staff

A morning's worth of budget paring was thrown out the window Friday, as town councillors voted to rescind their earlier decisions and give the job back to the department heads.

The 1987 budget, although cut earlier by \$600,000, was still up 28.8 per cent from last year.

"To sit down and go through this line by line would take a year to do," Coun. Pam Johnston said. "We can't do that, look how much got done this morning."

Approximately \$87,000 was trimmed in 3½ hours.

"I feel it would be much better if we adjourned for the day and asked the department (heads) to come back with more cuts," Mayor Russ Miller suggested. "In the past, this system of budgeting has worked very well, but this year, a 28.8 per cent increase is unrealistic."

Coun. John McDonald said he was hoping Friday's budget meeting would have been the last round in terms of staff making reductions.

Coun. Betty Fisher said she'd like to see staff bring forward lists of what 5, 10, and 20 per cent increases in the budget will buy. She said there may be budget items council feels should be included whereas staff may drop them.

Putting items in priority in the budget and making the cuts are a council responsibility, Coun. Pam Sheldon said.

"You may end up rubber stamping a budget instead of doing it yourself," she warned. "I don't think we'll be able to get it down to

the 5 per cent of previous years. We've seen the symptoms of the crowding on the bases. It's been coming for years."

Town Treasurer Ray King said he was caught by surprise when the capital and expenditure requests from the various departments came in this year.

Before the motion rescinding the Friday morning cuts was made, councillors had pared \$33,400 for refurbishing a 1975 pumper in Acton's fire station; \$1,000 from the Anti-Drinking and Driving Committee; \$200 from the LACAC; \$24,282 in grants; and \$2,000 in councillors' mileage and meals.

Searching for a better apple

By SANDY CAMPBELL
Herald Staff

Scientists from as far away as Japan travelled to a Norval apple orchard last week to do a little pruning.

About two dozen research scientists, professors and an entourage of over 300 orchard owners were at the Aldo Ferri and Sons Orchard on Heritage Road to study pruning. Not pruning for beauty sake, but pruning for the sake of a better fruit yield.

The orchard growers and scientists were mainly from North America. They were attending an annual four-day convention where the latest pruning techniques were discussed.

Having the specialists to the orchard was quite an honor, said Ray Ferri, Ray and his brothers Bob and Jim work the orchard with their father, Aldo. They are not strangers to pruning.

Aldo Ferri has lectured on pruning at the University of Guelph and at universities in the United States. The Ferri orchard was picked for pruning demonstration because it is near Toronto, where the conference is based, and because of the types and quality of trees on the Ferri orchard, Ray Ferri said.

Pruning trees is very important. Proper pruning can reduce the amount of time farmers spend in their orchards, and that means lower apple prices for everyone, Ray said.

If a tree is pruned correctly it will produce less wood and more fruit. Less wood means less time pruning. The Ferri apple orchard is 65 acres. The Ferri's will spend 2½ to 3 months pruning trees. That pruning time could be cut to one month, Ray said.

What orchard owners are seeking is a method which will stunt tree growth but not take away from the fruit yield.

So far, nobody knows of a method

which stops a tree's growth completely and allows fruit to flourish, Ray said.

There are many who study fruit tree pruning in the world and many do not agree on how it should be done. Some experiments do prove to work better than others," Ray said. But as yet there is no definite answer or best method.

While at the Ferri orchard, researchers experimented on about one dozen trees. The success of those methods won't be known until well into the apple growing season.

Pruning at the roots is one method pruners are working with. By pushing a blade into the ground the roots are cut. "Nobody knows when is the best time to cut roots or how much root to cut before the tree is killed," Ray said. Also, different kinds of fruit trees have different root systems.

Other methods of stunting a tree's growth involve chemicals or growth hormones. Soil and tissue analysis may also hold the much sought-after secret.

Less pruning and larger, better colored and shaped fruit are the goals. Researchers will go to great lengths to achieve these goals, even if it means making an apple tree not look like an apple tree.

One of the pruning experiments attempted at the Ferri orchard will make the trees look quite strange, said Ray. The trees will be cut so they look like a large coin about a foot wide sitting on a bowl. By cutting all the top east and west branches off, the tree will receive more sunlight, Ray said. The sun rises in the east and sets in the west.

Experiments on apple trees are also being tried on other fruit trees. The goals are the same, but the methods may differ, Ray said. In the end, the consumer will benefit, he said.

A CUT ABOVE-The apple orchards of Al Ferri were under invasion last Wednesday by groups of scientists and orchard owners on a day-long field trip to witness some hands-on pruning. The entourage of three busloads toured the Ferri farm on the Fifth Sideroad (Heritage Road) near Huttonville.



Some hands-on pruning. The entourage of three busloads toured the Ferri farm on the Fifth Sideroad (Heritage Road) near Huttonville.

Town needs 12 more staff council told

By ANI PEDERIAN
Herald Staff

Hiring 12 new permanent staff will definitely hike up the town's 1987 budget, Town Treasurer Ray King warned Friday morning at the town's budget committee meeting.

Moreover, the new staff will turn into budget expenses carried in the years to come.

Administrator-clerk Joe Simon wants another full-time secretary to help out his department and the bylaw enforcement officer. There's a part-time secretary now.

The town treasurer wants a computer programmer who has been on contract the last two years, made permanent.

The fire department wants a full-time secretary instead of a three-days-a-week secretary, and a fire prevention officer.

In the Engineering Department, Town Engineer Bob Austin wants three new staff: an engineering technologist, a construction inspector and a works employee. He also wants four months overlap time in which to train a new chief building inspector. Current inspector Doug Sargent retires in February 1988.

Town Planner Ian Keith wants one draftsman and a senior planner.

And finally, in the Recreation and Parks Department, Director Tom Shepard wants two parks employees.

Total impact on the 1987 budget: \$150,341.

"If the Enteric Property Corporation development goes, it would appear we'll need a construction inspector to look at that project,"

Administrator-Clerk Joe Simon said.

As for the engineering technologist, the intent is to put a middle management person in, Mr. Austin said.



Ian Keith

"We're not doing bad getting contracts called, but our follow-up is terrible. We have claims that are outstanding," he said.

"As you know, the planning department has a long list of reports on their plate to complete," Mr. Simon said. "These two people are an attempt to get them on their way."

Town Planner Ian Keith said the senior planner would concentrate on business development, and do special reports. The draftsman will allow the planning technician to move into a support role for development applications, he said.

"It's a catch-up game," Mr. Keith said. "The Region generates volumes of reports."

He said being close to Metropolitan Toronto and being part

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